RAY PRESENTS

WHAT shall I say to you that matters? Shall I talk about the battle of percentages which the C.E.A. of England is waging? Does it matter when millions of Britishers are laying down their lives to protect refugees; and to save the civilization which a remnant of the nations of the world now enjoy?

Shall I talk to you of picture successes, of coming programs, with a horde of murderers knocking at all our doors, while under our feet the earth has puddles of human blood; and across the ocean comes the piercing shrieks of little nations whose people are being annihilated because they tried to live at peace?

Shall I prostitute my pen and my spirit to relate to you the news that Stella Falk is suing the Canadian Moving Picture Digest and its editor for an alleged libel; and that the action is slated to be heard May 20th? Is this important as gossip or news?

Shall I tell you that your Editor is bringing a counter-action for alleged libel and conspiracy against Stella Falk, The Canadian Independent, and several exhibitors who are members of the I.T.A.?

Shall I tell you that the Pioneers of the U.S. are still talking about the hour speech which that "silvery-tongued" orator, Jimmy Walker, delivered at the meeting of the American Picture Pioneers at the Waldorf, New York?

Shall I tell you that Gladys Swarthout was the main attraction which sold out the Varsity Stadium when she appeared as guest artist with the Summer Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Reginald Stewart? Close to eight thousand people came to hear her.

SHALL I tell you that Samuel Goldwyn has declared himself against block-booking? He claims Hollywood cannot produce more than 200 pictures yearly, and that prices should be based on box-office draw.

Shall I continue, to tell you that Alexander Korda and Samuel Goldwyn came to New York together by plane from Hollywood, bound for the United Artists Convention. Their differences of opinion have been largely responsible, it is alleged, for the statements which Goldwyn has from time to time made in respect to his contractual relations with United Artists. Mr. Goldwyn is quoted as having said that all Hollywood knows that block-booking must go.

NOW watch the exhibitors complain. How the exhibitors can carry on without block-booking is beyond my powers of conjecture or reasoning. I can see how the big fellows can get along, but the little fellows, the Independents who must wait months and months for the big fellows to set the run, to get through with a picture, before the Independents can date it in — how these Independents can get along without program contracts is anyone's guess in or out of the Industry.

Mr. Goldwyn might like to come to Toronto and see how his theories can be worked out. I will offer him a theatre to manage, and let us see what he has to say about buying single pictures, paying for these according to box-office draw, eliminating double bills, etc., etc. Not forgetting giveaways, the latter which I heartily detest, but which appear to be a kindly hump upon the backs of exhibitors who find this hump has within it the power to promote a freer circulation of money at the box-office.

But, let us quote from Mr. Goldwyn. He states, "Hollywood has been turning out about 600 pictures a year, and experience proves that only about 200 of them have merit and value to win public support, to be, in other words, really worth making.

"Hollywood does not have the brains and talent to turn out more than 200 good ones a year. But it goes on making a flood of pictures at the rate in some studios of 50 a year, one a week, because the schedule calls for it. That means that they are making pictures with their eye on, not the important public with the buying power to support the industry, but that served by the little theatre in the sticks or the back streets, where they wait to run seven changes a week".

WELL, "sticks and back streets", you can figure out this Goldwynian analysis for what it is worth to you, because you, just as little nations, have a right to live. Mr. Goldwyn adds, however, that notwithstanding his opposition to block-booking, he is opposed to the Neely Bill because it does not stop with block-booking, it invades other distributor-producer and exhibitor rights.

The exhibitors of Saint John appear to have a co-operative service which is functioning. A report states that a pact was reached as to an agreement on prices, and that 25 cents was set as a minimum. The Opera House, re-named the Rialto, following the pact is said to have threatened to cut its price from fifteen cents to a nickel admission. Whereupon the Famous Players, Spencer, Saint John Amusement Co., Franklin & Herschorn, joined in a co-operative project to lease the Opera House and to keep it dark. Each of those mentioned pay an assessed sum to cover the monthly rental.

THE first annual convention of the Pacific Coast Conference of Independent Theatre Owners, convened to discuss trade practices, recently met at Los Angeles, with 200 exhibitors representing 1,250 Independent theatres in six western states, including Alaska, present. Robert H. Poole is executive secretary and general chairman. "Conciliation", stated Mr. Poole, "Is the backbone and keynote of the organization".

Such is our Motion Picture news. I write it as war news comes over the radio telling of long lines of harrassed refugees, of Holland reduced to a state of submission in order that its people and its country may not be entirely destroyed, of the fight for nearly a hundred miles along the Meuse; of a call to the people of England to offer their services for home defence, a twenty-four hour duty of watching at England's ramparts for Nazi parachutists.

How important is anything as I listen, as we listen. God Save England, and the Allies, for if we are unworthy of being saved, God Help what will be left of the world.

The Canadian Moving Picture Digest
Entered as Second Class Matter
RAY LEWIS - - - Editor and Publisher
Published by
CANADIAN MOVING PICTURE DIGEST COMPANY, LIMITED
259 Spadina Avenue - Toronto
Telephone: WAverley 4929
Cable: Raydigest
Established 1915. Publication weekly.
Subscription: $5.00 yearly

— Correspondents —
ROBERT LANSING.....Washington, D.C.
WARD SHAFTESBURY.....London, England
A. L. FAIRWEATHER.....Saint John, N.B.
J. J. CONKLIN.....Winnipeg, Man.
BRUCE PEACOCK.....Regina, Sask.

SHOOT GOVERNMENT FILM

Winnipeg, Man.—Marking the rapid expansion of the Canadian government's film programme, Gordon Sparling, Montreal producer, arrived in Winnipeg this week to film some sequences here for a moving picture on the peoples of Canada, which his company is making for the National Film Board.

The film, he said, will show how many different races combined to build Canada, forsaking their old loyalties in common devotion to the Dominion. A new technique will be used, the story being told through individual characters by means of close-ups and expressions, instead of by means of big feature scenes, Mr. Sparling added. With Cameraman Ross Beesley, who accompanies him, Mr. Sparling produced the Canadian Cameo series.

Winnipeg scenes of racial and historical interest are to be filmed by Associated Screen News for the Peoples of Canada documentary film of the National Film Board. The picture is one of 12 being made by the Film Board, mostly on Canada's war effort.

HAT TAYLOR A "POP"

Toronto, Ont.—Recent visitor here was Hat Taylor of RKO's Calgary exchange. He planed in, the trip taking him about 13 hours. Incidentally Hat is now the father of a baby girl, Diana Clare.

BLOOM WITH "GWTW"

Regina, Sask.—Dewey Bloom, publicity man for Metro, Toronto, has been in Western Canada exploiting "Gone With the Wind" appearances in western towns.

CITY COUNCIL TURNS DOWN "RIO" TAX REDUCTION PLEA

Sudbury, Ont.—City Council turned down the request of the Rio Theatre that the theatre should not be subject to the same seat tax as Sudbury's three other houses and that there should be a flat assessment of $50 up to 500 seats, with a rate of 25 cents per seat after that.

The Rio's counsel, G. M. Miller, K.C., stated that the other houses could be described as "downtown" and that the Rio was a neighborhood theatre and therefore should not be subject to the same seat tax.

Universal Pictures New Program Slates 59 Features

COMPANY TO MAKE MORE TOP-BUDGET FILMS

Atlantic City, N.J.—William A. Scully, Vice-President and General Sales Manager of Universal Pictures, announced the company's 1940-41 product, revealing the company's plans to make 42 features in addition to three Frank Lloyd productions, seven pictures co-starring Richard Arlen and Andy Devine, and seven pictures starring Johnny Mack Brown. Canadians attending the company's convention at the Ambassador Hotel here, were Clair Hague, Canadian Universal representative, Oscar Hanson, Paul Nathanson and A. Perry of the Toronto Empire-Universal office.

Production list includes the following. Two Deanna Durbin films, to be produced by Joe Pasternak under the direction of Henry Koster. "Back Street", from the novel by Fanny Hurst. Three Frank Lloyd productions. "When The Daltons Rode", with Walter Pidgeon, Kay Francis, Brian Donlevy, Robert Stack, Andy Devine and Broderick Crawford An Irene Dunne production. Two Marlene Dietrich productions. "Seven Sinners", and "Countess of New Orleans", both to be directed by Joe Pasternak. W. C. Fields in "The Bank Dick". A Charles Boyer production, "Glamour", based upon the Edna Ferber story, to be produced by Pasternak and directed by Henry Koster.

"Riviera", starring Allan Jones, with score by Jerome Kern. "A Little Bit of Heaven", starring Gloria Jean. "Straight From the Heart", starring Gloria Jean, with Robert Cummings, Nan Grey, Butch and Buddy. A William Seiter production. A Bob Burns and Martha Raye production. "Trail of the Vigilantes", a stirring drama of early Montana days. A George Marshall production—a follow up of the "Destry Rides Again" type. "Tight Shoes", story by Damon Runyon, famed columnist. The Ritz Brothers in one film. Two Baby Sandy productions—"Sandy's Day Out" and "Butch Minds the Baby". "Modern Monte Cristo," with Victor McLaglen. Two Hugh Herbert pictures, "Who's Crazy Now?" and "Slightly Tempted". "The Invisible Woman"—to be directed by Joe May. "Argentine Nights", with the Andrews Sisters. "The Black Cat", a comedy-horror version of Edgar Allen Poe's famous story. The Dead End Kids and The Little Tough Guys, together in two productions, "Give Us Wings" and "Fighting Stowaways". "The Monster of Zombor", with Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi. "Moonlight in Hawaii".

The balance of the pictures will be "Marquee Productions", to be selected from the following properties: "San Francisco Docks", "Streets of Cairo", "Black Pearls", "Ragtime Cowboy Joe", "They Dance In Havana", "Wildcat of Paris," "Rhapsody In Stripes", "The Acquittal", "Dust Bowl", "Ghost Patrol" and "Margie".

Short subjects program includes 12 two-reel musical shorts, 13 one-reel subjects, a two-reel special, 15 Stranger Than Fiction and 15 Going Places. In addition there will be 104 issues of the Universal Newsreel with Graham McNamee as commentator.

B. E. NORRISH ON QUEEN'S COUNCIL

Montreal, Que. — Mr. B. E. Norrish, managing director of Associated Screen News Limited, has been elected to the council of Queens University. Queen's graduates from all parts of the world participated in the election.

F. G. SPENCER SPEAKER

Saint John, N.B. — A much appreciated talk on "The Moving Picture Business" was given before the Kinsmen's Club of Saint John, at their fortnightly dinner by F. Gorden Spencer. Mr. Spencer described visits to the studios at Hollywood and told of meeting many of the famous stars of the screen. In a most interesting way he described the making of motion pictures and also told something of the business side of the Industry. Mr. Spencer is the elder son of F. G. Spencer of the F. G. Spencer Company Ltd.

FILM CRITIC PASSES

Winnipeg, Man.—Alfred E. McGinley, 60, moving picture critic and dramatic editor of The Tribune, Winnipeg, died recently at his home in Winnipeg, after an illness of several weeks. He was former moving picture censor of the New Brunswick government. Born in Saint John, N.B., he had been in newspaper work for 37 years.

LAVELL TO "GRAND"

Sherbrooke, Que.—Bernard Lavell has been appointed the new manager of the Granada Theatre by United Amusement Corp., following the resignation of Rudolphe L. Vallee.

Mr. Lavell, thirty-two years of age, comes to Sherbrooke from St. Hyacinthe, where he was manager of the Maska Theatre for the past two and a half years. He started with the company in Montreal, and within a short time rose from the position of projectionist to that of manager.

APPOINT NORA HOGAN

Corner Brook, Nfld.—Miss Nora C. Hogan, sister of the late Ronald T. Hogan, has been appointed to succeed her brother as manager of the Capitol Theatre at St. John's.

British Columbia Gasoline War Effects Show Business

DOWNTOWN THEATRES SUFFERED 20% LOSSES

Vancouver, B.C.—British Columbia's gasoline war which lasted seven days brought a drop in box office receipts estimated as high as twenty per cent. in downtown Vancouver houses. On the other hand, suburban houses found little or no decrease in ordinary business, and in some cases, increases, directly attributable to the war were noted. Those were the surface effects of the extraordinary strike. But underneath, many shrewd showmen, and other businessmen, recognized it as a test case between big business and the government.

The gas war came about when the B.C. government obtained power, through the Supreme Court of Canada, to set wholesale and retail gasoline prices in the province. Immediately, the government cut both retail and wholesale prices, and equally as promptly, the oil companies ceased all deliveries of the fuel to service stations. Inside of two days all service stations in the city were dry and Vancouver settled into a gasoline famine. Only those engaged in essential services and commercial concerns holding contracts with the companies, were allowed to purchase gasoline.

Within a few days downtown Vancouver had a perpetual Sunday look. The pinch, hardly noticeable the first day or two, started eating into the box-office with a quickly accelerating pace until, on the seventh day, business was conservatively estimated by such reliable judges as Ivan Ackery, manager of the Orpheum, and K. E. Hayter, assistant-manager of the Plaza, as at least one-fifth below normal. No one cared to estimate what the final level would have been had the strike lasted just a few more days.

Meanwhile suburbans, while losing only a few of their regular patrons, drew many fans, who ordinarily would have attended downtown houses, but who were obliged to attend their local theatre for lack of gas for the family car.

Aside from the immediate distress caused by the strike, showmen in Vancouver, and of course, businessmen generally, were deeply concerned with the outcome as they saw in it an indication of the future policies of the B.C. government. As Mr. Hayter put it, "the government now has almost dictatorial powers over business." It was felt that the stand taken by the oil companies would demonstrate just how far the government would go in exercising those powers.

All breathed easier when a final compromise was reached. The companies have agreed to accept slight cut in prices, but nothing so drastic as at first dictated by the government. Although the compromise has been accepted by them, the outcome of the strike is regarded here as a clear-cut victory for the oil companies, and, in consequence, for industry.

JERNBERG TAKES OVER ORPHEUM MANAGEMENT

Winnipeg, Man. — Helmer N. Jernberg, who has been lessee of the Rio, the former Province Theatre, for the past 25 years, has taken over the management of the Orpheum Theatre, erected in 1910 at a cost of $600,000, and is showing a programme of motion pictures. The Rio is owned by John Schuberg, pioneer showman, now a resident of Vancouver, B.C.

ST. QUENTIN THEATRE

St. Quentin, N.B. — The theatre which L. Alf Marcheterre is planning to open at St. Quentin, N.B., will have a seating capacity of 175 seats and will be called "The Canadian Theatre". Mr. Marcheterre, will have associated with him Aurel Guimond, and expects to have the theatre open six days, evenings only.

NEW 1200 SEAT HOUSE

Vancouver, B.C. — June 1st is the probable starting date for the demolition of the stores at 922-26 Granville St., to make way for a new $75,000 theatre which Vested Estates Ltd. will build. The house will have a seating capacity of 1200, and it is the intention of the owners to lease the property.

GRAND RENOVATIONS

Regina, Sask.—Workmen are renovating the lobby of the Grand theatre. First improvements will include the laying of a new marble floor and the building of a new box-office. Improvements are expected in the auditorium of the theatre later in the year.

New Super GARDINER Projector with barrel rear shutter, has no equal for fine projection and long life. As low as $9.00 weekly.

GET OUR PRICES AND YOU WILL SURELY BUY FROM US! YOU CAN GUESS THE REASON WHY!

REOPEN PALACE WITH PETE EGAN AT HELM

Calgary, Alta. — Closed for two weeks while workmen worked 24-hour shifts to complete interior renovations, the Palace Theatre here, opened with a stage and screen performance recently.

A new concrete floor was laid and new seats were installed. The commodious theatre chairs have been spaced to allow for more leg room and the aisles have been changed. Main floor seats are wine colored and loge seats are royal blue. The loge section is deeper than formerly.

Entire system of house lighting has been changed. Chrome indirect fixtures cover the ceiling, wall lighting is subdued and decorative in the auditorium and on the mezzanine and foyer floors, adding a beauty to the walls. Offices and public rooms of the theatre have the same system. Rich carpeting with a wine color base and a floral pattern covers the floors, stairways, and aisles. Mezzanine floor has modernistic furniture of metal with smokers' stands. Wall decorations on this floor include plates and mirrors. In the ladies' rest room wall color starts at the base with a rose that is graduated to a light ivory. Mirrors and furnishings have been added.

On the stage, Sonny Fry and his orchestra have been supplied with new equipment and a new opening valance covers the screen. The new screen is perforated. Orchestra pit has been entirely removed, while the organ console has been raised and curtained off. Sound equipment and projection machines have been improved. Opening picture was "Broadway Melody of 1940". Ted Forsey was at the console of the organ. Sonny Fry and his band and other entertainers were on the stage. Pete Egan at the helm.

ALTER HARTNEY HOUSE

Hartney, Man. — Extensive alterations are now being made to the local picture house by M. Mass, of Winnipeg, who recently purchased the building. There will be a new and larger entrance and lobby, ladies' lounge room and new ticket booth. The front and interior will be redecorated, and new screen and seating installed.

RENOVATE CAPITOL OTTAWA

Ottawa, Ont.—New seats are being installed at the Capitol Theatre here. In addition to the re-seating, new carpets are being laid down in the lobby and new furniture purchased for foyer and lobby. It is also expected that some changes will be made to the front of the theatre.

GREGORY RENOVATED

Oakville, Ont. — The Gregory Theatre here has been thoroughly renovated and redecorated. New lighting fixtures and theatre seating have been installed.

PRINCESS DAMAGED

Val d'Or, Que. — The Princess Theatre here, was damaged to the extent of about $2,000 when fire broke out in the furnace room at about 3 a.m. on Saturday. Business continued as usual the next day.

THIEFS FOILED

Three Rivers, Que. — Thiefs were foiled in their attempt to break into the safe of the Capitol Theatre here, when they were not able to break the door. Robbers only carried off $1 in change and a revolver.

APPOINT JAY LIEBERMAN MANAGER RIALTO EDMONTON

Saint John, N.B. — It will be of interest to friends of "Joe" Lieberman to learn that his brother Jay L. Lieberman has recently been appointed manager of the Rialto Theatre, at Edmonton, Alberta.

Mr. Lieberman of the Maritime Film Company, Saint John, with Mr. Bernstein, recently visited Madawaska, Maine, where the State Theatre, which has been taken over by Messrs. Bernstein and Leiberman, of the Maritime Film Company, is being improved and redecorated.

ERECTS HIGHWAY SIGNS

Regina Sask.—Hoping to cash in on the expected influx of tourists to Canada this summer, Bill Novak, Capitol manager, has erected new signs on all highways leading into Regina.

DONATE THEATRE

Oshawa, Ont. — The Biltmore Theatre here donated the use of its auditorium to the Calvary Baptist Church for its Sunday evening service.

LEGION SPONSORS "FRANCE IS READY"

Indian Head, Sask.—The Canadian Legion sponsored "France is Ready" at the Auditorium here recently and profit went into a fund to provide cigarettes for Indian Head boys on active service overseas.

THE SUCCESS
of your
THEATRE
depends upon
GOOD EQUIPMENT
consult
GENERAL
THEATRE SUPPLY COMPANY Ltd.
104 BOND STREET TORONTO • 336 MAYOR STREET MONTREAL

SHOW PREVIEW FILM

Regina, Sask. — Charlie Barrynowski of the Met Theatre treated members of the press, radio, legislature and military to an advance preview of "Three Cheers for the Irish" recently.

JOINS R.C.A.F.

Saskatoon, Sask. — Richard A. Basset, employee of the Capitol Theatre here, has left for Toronto where he will be a pilot in the Royal Canadian Air Force.

SAINT JOHN VISITORS

Saint John, N.B.—Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Williams of Chipman, N.B., and Mr. and Mrs. Frank H. Sobey visited Saint John recently. Mr. Sobey is manager of the Roxy Theatre at Westville, N.S., and of the Jubilee at Stellarton, N.S. With Mrs. Sobey he is motoring to the Southern States, making stops at Boston, New York and other United States cities on the way.

Trans-Canada Showings

TORONTO

AVENUE
"The Amazing Mr. Williams" (Columbia), with Melvyn Douglas and Joan Blondell, also "Calling All Marines" (Republic).

IMPERIAL
"Johnny Apollo" (20th Century-Fox), with Tyrone Power and Dorothy Lamour.

LOEW'S
"Young Tom Edison" (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), with Mickey Rooney, Fay Bainter and George Bancroft.

SHEA'S
"The Secret of Dr. Kildare" (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), with Lew Ayres and Lionel Barrymore.

UPTOWN
"Too Many Husbands" (Columbia), with Jean Arthur, Melvyn Douglas and Fred MacMurray.

SAINT JOHN

CAPITOL
"Strange Cargo" (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), with Clark Gable and Joan Crawford.

MAYFAIR
"Invisible Stripes" (Warner Bros.), with George Raft, Jane Bryan and William Holden, also "Dramatic School" (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), with Luise Rainer and Paulette Goddard.

STRAND
"Charlie McCarthy, Detective" (Universal), with Edgar Bergen, Charlie McCarthy, Mortimer Snerd.

MONTREAL

CAPITOL
"Dark Command" (Republic), with Claire Trevor, John Wayne and Walter Pidgeon, also "Ma! He's Making Eyes At Me" (Universal), with Constance Moor and Tom Brown.

LOEW'S
2nd week. "Irene" (RKO Radio), with Anna Neagle and Ray Milland.

ORPHEUM
8th week. "Rebecca" (United Artists), with Laurence Olivier and Joan Fontaine.

PALACE
"Forty Little Mothers" (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), with Eddie Cantor, Judith Anderson and Rita Johnson.

PRINCESS
"Star Dust" (20th Century-Fox), with Linda Darnell, John Payne and Roland Young, also "Free, Blonde and 21" (20th Century-Fox), with Lynn Bari, Mary Beth Hughes, Joan Davis and Henry Wilcoxon.

WINNIPEG

CAPITOL
"Strange Cargo" (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), with Clark Gable and Joan Crawford.

GAIETY
"The Grapes of Wrath" (20th Century-Fox), with Henry Fonda and Jane Darwell, also "A Chump at Oxford" (United Artists), with Laurel and Hardy.

GARRICK
"Too Many Husbands" (Columbia), with Jean Arthur, Fred MacMurray and Melvyn Douglas.

LYCEUM
"The Earl of Chicago" (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), with Robert Montgomery, Edward Arnold and Reginald Owen.

METROPOLITAN
"I Take This Woman" (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), with Spencer Tracy and Hedy Lamarr.

CALGARY

CAPITOL
"Buck Benny Rides Again" (Paramount), with Jack Benny, Ellen Drew, Andy Devine, Phil Harris and Rochester.

PALACE
"Of Mice and Men" (United Artists), with Lon Chaney Jr., Burgess Meredith and Betty Field, also "A Chump At Oxford (United Artists), with Laurel and Hardy.

STRAND
"The Hunchback of Notre Dame" (RKO Radio), with Charles Laughton and Maureen O'Hara.

VANCOUVER

CAPITOL
"My Son My Son" (United Artists), with Madeleine Carroll, Brian Aherne and Louis Hayward.

DOMINION
"Of Mice and Men" (United Artists), with Lon Chaney Jr., Burgess Meredith and Betty Field, also "The Ghost Comes Home" (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), with Frank Morgan.

ORPHEUM
"Buck Benny Rides Again" (Paramount), with Jack Benny, Rochester, Andy Devine and Phil Harris.

PLAZA
"Barricade" (20th Century-Fox), with Alice Faye and Warner Baxter.

STRAND
"The Earl of Chicago" (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), with Robert Montgomery, Edward Arnold and Reginald Owen also "Little Orvie" (RKO Radio).